

U.S. Department of Education
2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mrs. Lisa Pierce

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Elk Creek Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 804 Main Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City New Castle State CO Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 81647-8719

County Garfield County State School Code Number* 2573

Telephone 970-665-6900 Fax 970-665-6901

Web site/URL http://www.garfieldre2.k12.co.us/education/school/school.php?sectionid=2034&linkid=nav-menu-container-1-21264 E-mail lpierce@garfieldre2.org

Twitter Handle N/A Facebook Page N/A Google+ N/A

YouTube/URL N/A Blog N/A Other Social Media Link N/A

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Susan Birdsey E-mail: sbirdsey@garfieldre2.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Garfield RE-2 Tel. 970-665-7600

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mrs. Chris Pearson
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 2 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 10 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- ☐ Urban or large central city
 - ☐ Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - ☐ Suburban
 - ☒ Small city or town in a rural area
 - ☐ Rural
3. 2 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	17	12	29
K	31	19	50
1	30	25	55
2	20	28	48
3	28	26	54
4	31	18	49
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total Students	157	128	285

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 2 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 1 % Black or African American
 - 44 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 49 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 23%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	36
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	29
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	65
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	285
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.228
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	23

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 23 %
57 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1
 Specify non-English languages: Spanish
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 44 %
 Total number students who qualify: 123

If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

9. Students receiving special education services: 11 %
31 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

3 Autism	0 Orthopedic Impairment
0 Deafness	7 Other Health Impaired
0 Deaf-Blindness	2 Specific Learning Disability
0 Emotional Disturbance	16 Speech or Language Impairment
0 Hearing Impairment	0 Traumatic Brain Injury
0 Mental Retardation	0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
2 Multiple Disabilities	1 Developmentally Delayed

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers	15
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	7
Paraprofessionals	15
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	93%	94%	94%	89%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

PART III – SUMMARY

Elk Creek Elementary is located in New Castle, Colorado, which serves as the gateway to the Western Colorado Rocky Mountains and is located along the Colorado River. We are located only an hour away from two world-renowned ski resorts, Aspen and Vail, and our area provides year round opportunities to appreciate the beauty of Colorado. We serve a community of 285 students from Preschool through fourth grade. Our student enrollment is a reflection of our community population, with our student count being 48% White and 45% Hispanic along with 47% of our students receiving free/reduced meals.

Our school opened as a Preschool-4th grade elementary school in the fall of 2008 when our neighboring school became overpopulated. Many of our staff worked together previously at the former school and came willingly to Elk Creek Elementary. Through the years here at Elk Creek our experienced staff has worked diligently every day to bring our vision to life that “we will create a positive learning community that inspires all students and staff to become lifelong learners who will reach their highest potential.”

Elk Creek Elementary has set a tradition as being a school of high achievement for all students. We have a network of Solutions Teams that focus on the areas of Family/Homework, Community, Response to Intervention (RtI), Positive Culture, Attendance, and English Language Learners, all led by teacher leaders. Each of these teams set quarterly goals to work towards. Some goals focus on school wide needs while others focus on specific subgroups of students, ultimately focusing on our “hotlist” students. Each team meets monthly to review progress towards their goals and we also all meet together as one group at the end of each quarter to share our results and any new goals that have been set. This tight network allows the whole team to stay informed and enables us to support each other while helping all students to be successful.

We have many traditions at Elk Creek Elementary to readily provide students and families with books to create a love of reading. Books are given to families at the beginning of each year at Fall Home Visits and approximately 1,000 books are awarded to students throughout each year as positive incentives for weekly student successes.

Elk Creek Elementary exhibits a variety of strengths. We have a culture of high expectations for our students and staff. Both our leadership team and classroom teachers advocate maximizing our time within our schedule to provide opportunities to learn and the time on task of our students. We continuously work to improve our home to school relations and welcome parent feedback through an online parent surveys. We have multiple parent, community, and high school volunteers present in our classrooms each day, strengthening our support system for our students. Families who struggle with homework, can be supported by staff and parent volunteers who run our daily homework support system called Homework Café. With frequent monitoring and feedback provided around instruction, our teachers work each day to become better at their practice. Systems are in place that allows teachers to observe and give feedback to each other as well, which is successful because of the trust and respect that they have in each other as a team.

In the short amount of time that Elk Creek Elementary has been in existence many great accomplishments have materialized due to the hard work of our students, strong partnership with our families, and dedication of our staff. We work hard “to encourage, nurture, and challenge every student, every day,” just as our district vision statement sites. Students with significant gaps are supported and embraced by the whole staff as it takes a village to raise a child. In 2012 we were honored to be a recipient of the Colorado Governor’s Distinguished Improvement Award, recognizing our efforts to be a school of high achievement and high growth. We continue to work hard each day to rise to these high expectations. We take an intense look at our yearly data and put into place our plan to address the needs of our students so that we can continue to close the achievement gaps and see the growth of all of our students. It is this collaborative work that shows that Elk Creek Elementary is worthy of National Blue Ribbon status.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. The Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) provides a standardized measure of performance in reading, writing, and math for our third and fourth grade students.

Over the last five years we have not only increased our overall achievement scores in all areas, but we have seen tremendous growth in achievement in our sub groups as well. In 2009 our overall reading achievement was at 66% proficient or advanced (P/A). In 2013 we have increased that to 87% P/A. Within those same five years our Hispanic students have seen an increase of achievement from 34% to 71% P/A, Free and Reduced Lunch students have increased from 41% to 79% P/A, and our English Language Learners have increased from 29% to 64% P/A.

In the area of mathematics we have seen an increase in our overall performance from 60% in 2009 up to 87% P/A in 2013. Once again within those five years, we have worked hard to close the gaps with our subgroups and have increased our Hispanic students' proficiency from 34% to 87% P/A, Free and Reduced Lunch students have increased from 36% to 87% P/A, and our English Language Learners have increased from 26% to 91% P/A.

These overall scores and the scores of our subgroups have risen and stayed above the Colorado state average and it is our goal to stay above the state average and continue to maintain our overall percent proficient and advanced above 80% and to get all subgroups to this proficiency level as well.

B. When we look for trends within our five years of data we see that our achievement scores have been on a steady increase in both reading and math in both our overall achievement scores as well as our achievement scores within our subgroups. We attribute the growth across grade levels and within our subgroups to a number of factors, a system that runs as a network of teams focused on our district's vision to "encourage, nurture, and challenge every student, every day."

When our school opened five years ago a lot of systems had to be put in place, just as they would in any new school. Through the years we have worked on building consistency across grade levels and holding every teacher and student to high standards. We continually look for ways to improve our instruction and to meet the needs of each of our students.

Each year through the development of our Unified Improvement plan, we dig deeper to focus in on what needs to be addressed by our school goals, whether it be as broad as instructional strategies across all grade levels in all subject areas or as narrow as a specific subgroup within a certain subject area.

During these last five years there has been and continues to be some big transitions with the adoption of new standards and the implementation of different state assessments. Throughout this time, we have used our grade level planning times and collaboration day professional development opportunities to make sure that our lessons are aligned to the standards to make sure we are teaching the right stuff and assessing student learning along the way.

Using data from teacher developed formative assessments, Acuity benchmark assessments, Scholastic Reading Inventory, and DIBELS, we continually look at the level of each student and plan our instruction around the needs of our students.

Throughout the year we take time to celebrate student successes. Making sure each student feels some level of success helps to build their confidence, make them love learning, and challenges them to continue to learn and grow.

In the most recent year's data, we do have a few subgroups that have an achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points. In the area of reading, these groups include our Special Education students, our Hispanic

students, and our ELL students. Within the area of math, it is only our Special Education students that have an achievement gap of 10 or more percentage points.

To help close these gaps, we have taken a close look at each of the students within these subgroups as we developed our Unified Improvement Plan. Schoolwide goals have been set to not only support the students within these subgroups in the grade levels that participate in state assessments, but support the students within these subgroups starting in kindergarten. We believe this early intervention model will support these students throughout the grade levels and that we will close the gap.

When we look at the students within these subgroups, we see that it really is the same students that are part of each of these groups. The goals that we have set therefore address the needs of each of the subgroups. Specifically this year we have set goals and provided professional development to support these goals. We have utilized our para professional support differently to support classrooms and provide additional interventions. We feel the changes we have made will help continue to close the achievement gaps.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Each August the staff of Elk Creek Elementary reviews the results of the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP). We work collaboratively to probe into the results to help determine what our next steps should be. Together we develop a plan of action that includes a “global” plan for our school as well as for “individual” students. The global plan becomes a part of our UIP, and the individual student plan is created with the input of the students’ guardians, current teacher, past teachers, special education coordinator, literacy coach, counselor, academic coach and principal. To ensure that students will be successful we use additional data from DIBELS, Acuity and a variety of classroom assessments to drive our plan/instruction.

In addition to the school’s performance on the TCAP, we use quarterly assessments to measure student academic growth in all content areas. By using multiple data points through Acuity, SRI, and DIBELS assessments each quarter, the results enable teachers and support staff to determine where a student needs additional support and gives us a comprehensive view of student academic growth as the year progresses. This data, in turn, assists teachers in creating a comprehensive intervention plan to support struggling students. Throughout the school year, we also use a variety of classroom assessments to drive instruction and identify struggling students. In each grade level, pre and post tests are created in all content areas to help drive teacher’s instruction, determine academic growth in each learning unit as well as measure individual student growth. At the end of a unit of study, teaching teams reconvene to discuss any changes that need to be made in the instructional groupings based on student performance. We also use this data to support each student’s individual academic needs. To support students who are struggling in math, we provide additional instruction through a math intervention block to reteach and review difficult concepts. We also provide math enrichment during this block for students who are not struggling with content, but need support to reach higher achievement in mathematics. To address students who are in need of additional support in reading, we have a school-wide Eagle Block that is designed to specifically target gaps in reading as well as enrich and extend student’s literacy development.

It is imperative that assessment results are communicated with the parents of our students. We use our monthly school newsletter to announce TCAP results and show how our grade levels are doing on quarterly benchmark testing. Parents are given an SRI summary report for their child after each round of testing. Also, a DIBELS summary report showing reading progress and growth is sent home three times a year. We meet with all parents for fall conferences, going over individual student achievement and gains. In the winter, teachers schedule conferences for all students in the RtI process, and for any students who are below grade level in one or more areas, as well as for students with behavior concerns. Teachers are encouraged to keep in contact with parents even more frequently by email and through phone calls.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Collaboration across the district has been a foundational element of ensuring success for students and promoting consistency across schools. As a school, we have active representatives involved in sharing

successful strategies, gained through experiences and practice. Using research-based strategies, we have ensured high achievement in alignment with state and district standards. All teachers at Elk Creek assume leadership roles in solutions teams, sharing lessons with other schools, and developing instructional guidelines.

One way we share successful strategy use and implementation is through our monthly school-wide collaboration days. We spend our mornings working together as a school, reviewing data to drive our instruction and presenting successful strategies to one another. Our Solutions Committees have identified high need and target students, and continually monitor their growth. For example, our ELL committee supports these learners by supporting teachers with strategies and resources to implement in our own classrooms. Commonly our afternoons are broadened to grade level or subject specific teams with other members from across the district. With implementation of new state standards and units, the collaborative efforts have proven to be invaluable. Content area teachers and grade level teams have been proactive in developing instructional guidelines and practices together.

Teachers from our school have participated in collaborative efforts between other schools from our district. Our practices in terms of: Professional Learning Community team planning, blind scoring, Teachers Supporting Teachers during Response to Intervention process, peer observations, have set a precedent in our district for high quality commitment to collaboration. On many occasions, teachers from across the district have observed our staff in action in order gain resources, insight, and strategies to support learners. Teachers walk away with instructional tools to lead in implementation of differentiation, PLCs, and strategy use in their own buildings and classrooms.

Contributions that Elk Creek Elementary staff have made on the state level include representation for CDE unit development, common assessment planning committees, CDE panel discussions, writing unit buildout contributors (and following related district-level professional development). Our instructional coaches have taken leadership initiative to share examples of unit instruction from our building, thus leading to further implementation of units and assessments at the district level. The Garfield Re-2 SB191 task force has prepared teachers in our district to be successful under the new teacher evaluation guidelines. Representatives from our school include administrative and teacher staff, making our school's participation on the committee unique and valuable.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

Engaging families and communities is imperative because we are a key venue that draws our rural community together. One way is to draw parents and community members into school by creating fun and engaging family events like Men's Morning, Moms and Muffins, ice cream social, Raising Reader Night, a talent show, and a school carnival. We keep parents informed of events through monthly newsletters, e-mail and website postings, bilingual all call messaging, bilingual quarterly data brochures, school marquee announcements, weekly classroom newsletters, and positive phone calls home.

We personally invite our struggling students' families to every event and include community members as judges of writing and science fair contests or presenters of awards. Community members, parents, and high school students volunteer to support our reading program and at special events throughout the year. These special events include a high school science demonstration assembly, Bring a Veteran to School, Career Day, Denver Zoo and Denver Museum visits, and the Aspen Dance Company performance. Through a grant, we hosted a community Summer Reading Program. Elk Creek Elementary also serves as a meeting place for community sports, boy scouts, Girls on the Run program, the Extended School Year program, and partners with universities to provide a place for shadowing and student teaching.

Additional community connections are created through business partnerships and The Parent Teacher Accountability Committee (PTAC). ECE currently has 25 business partnerships that donate a variety of gifts, materials, or items to support our programs. In return we advertise their business in a variety of ways. We also invite parents, business owners and businesses tied in with Junior Achievement to come in and share how education was paramount to their success in their careers. The PTAC meets monthly with parent

and staff members to discuss school needs, plan family focused events, and raise money to support our science, technology, library, character education program, state testing snacks, recycling, and grade level needs.

Last, we believe it takes the collaboration of family, school, and surrounding community to support the whole child to help them reach their highest potential. Through a full-time counselor we implement a social emotional learning and anti-bullying/conflict resolution program. Local agencies provide dictionaries, food bags to needy families, cold weather clothes and school supplies to our school. Vouchers for glasses and dental work, tooth screenings, aid for counseling, medical, and recreational support for families in need are also provided.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Elk Creek Elementary has implemented the Colorado Academic Standards based on the Common Core State Standards. The 21st Century Skills, included in the Colorado Standards, provide a framework for applying and transferring knowledge and skills among all content areas: reading, writing and communicating; mathematics; personal finance; social studies; science; comprehensive health and physical education; music; and technology.

Elk Creek Elementary's mission is to create a positive learning community that inspires students and staff to become lifelong learners who will reach their highest potential. Our teachers take pride in creating an environment that uses effective instruction and researched-based strategies to ensure high yield engagement that supports all students. Data driven instruction is a high priority at Elk Creek Elementary. We offer intervention programs for students needing extra support as well as enrichment to individuals that achieve above the grade level standards or curriculum. Our integrated content approach provides ample opportunities for hands-on, inquiry-based learning that builds on sequential skills and promotes success for all students.

Student leaders uphold a positive environment through many programs such as Safe School Ambassadors, Student Council, The 7 Pillars of building character, and class council. For example, students are given opportunities to be role models to younger students through our Safe School Ambassador program. Our 3rd and 4th grade students also work as peer tutors to support younger students in reading, writing, technology, and math skills.

Our students are taught concepts and skills that are rigorous with depth and complexity. Teachers collaborate with coaches, specialists, and their peers to provide the best experience for student learning. Reading and writing are aligned with quality literature with daily opportunities to explore different genres and styles. Goal setting, teacher discussions, and collaboration with peers are evident in all subjects. Literacy is promoted in all content areas including mathematics, science, social studies, technology and performing arts.

Beginning in Kindergarten, students showcase their learning through technology. Students are exposed to keyboarding skills in all grade levels. For example, younger students learn keyboarding skills using Keyboarding Zoo off of ABCYA and Dance Mat Typing. Third and Fourth grade use Typing Web to support keyboarding skills as they publish projects created in Keynote and PowerPoint.

As early as Pre-School, students begin learning the fundamentals of reading, writing, and math through interactive play. Our Kindergarten students use Randee Bergen's "Teaching Writing in Kindergarten" that builds on phonemic awareness and phonics to learn the writing process. First grade students integrate text based writing within science to create real life and hands on experiences to understand the life cycle. Second grade students research inventors and their innovations that align with the writing process as well as use text features and technology to enhance their final projects.

Third grade integrates math, economics, and writing to create an invention that is sold to other students during their "Kids' Town" experience. Technology is implemented by fourth graders to illustrate personal biographies and timelines in their study of Colorado History. Students also dress up as Colorado Characters and present through the lens of the character to teach their life experiences and accomplishments.

Students receive weekly instruction in physical education, music, art, technology, and library. These teachers collaborate with all staff to teach lessons that promote understanding of their concepts and skills. Songs, dance, stories, and celebrations give students insight into communities and cultures that are similar and different from their own. Additionally, 3rd and 4th grade students have the opportunity to receive one on one and small group vocal training and choir.

Elk Creek Elementary uses the Colorado Academic Standards to provide a framework for applying and transferring knowledge and skills among all content areas: reading, writing and communicating; mathematics; personal finance; social studies; science; comprehensive health and physical education; music; and technology to support college and career readiness.

2. Reading/English:

Elk Creek Elementary uses Success For All, a comprehensive program designed to engage the whole school in meeting the needs of all children by leveling students into small classes. Teacher instruction is built around the cooperative learning framework that engages students in discussions. Small group and peer conversations use higher order thinking skills to excel students in their thinking and reasoning. Common language is used across all grade levels as students develop the skills needed to be successful readers. Skills development and application are reinforced through positive peer interactions and student feedback, which result in rapid advancement in reading. Interactive lessons are fully aligned to Common Core State Standards.

Our approach is based on best practices. Each teacher uses the cycle of effective instruction that emphasizes vocabulary presentation, modeling through read aloud, peer partner reading, and answering daily text questions such as cause and effect, drawing conclusions, sequencing, problem/solutions and compare and contrast.

At Elk Creek Elementary, our reading program is divided into three tiers. Kindergarten uses a thematic approach to learning that addresses all key developmental domains. Our kindergarten instruction builds on oral language, phonemic awareness, and phonics. Our second tier provides interactive instruction that emphasizes phonics, fluency, and comprehension supported by decodable stories. The second tier allows for a smooth transition into our third tier, which centers on a variety of literature and informational text. Each teacher knows the beginning and end expectations, so all students can reach their highest potential. The four core comprehension strategies our teachers focus on are clarifying, questioning, predicting, and summarizing.

This design allows students at each grade level to be instructed at their instructional level, whether it is below, at, or above grade level. Those students needing extra support have their needs met in our school-wide intervention block. Some of the areas of focus during intervention block include; word recognition, fluency, and comprehension.

3. Mathematics:

Our mathematics curriculum is based on the Colorado Academic Standard Units. The units vary based on the Colorado Academic Standards in each grade level. In third grade, we have seven units for the year. The units are Multiplication and Division, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Number and Operations in Base Ten, Measurement, Fractions, Data Collection and Representation, Geometry, and Time, Volume and Mass.

Everyday Math is the resource used for Kindergarten through fourth grade. This resource is research-based and field-tested to focus on developing children's understandings and skills in ways that produce life-long mathematical thinking. During math instruction, teachers emphasize: use of concrete/real-life examples, repeated exposures to mathematical concepts and skill, frequent practice of basic computation skills and use of multiple methods, and problem-solving strategies to foster true proficiency and accommodate different learning styles.

Our math curriculum includes reading and writing, along with higher order thinking skills. The vocabulary and content are presented in a narrative form through key generalizations, symbols and algorithms. Students collaborate and justify their reasoning through debate and conversations with peers. Writing is visible through explaining answers, processes, and solutions.

At Elk Creek Elementary, daily math instruction is a combination of whole group instruction, small group instruction, and individual interventions based on the skills students need. Concrete modeling and hands on manipulatives serve as an effective pathway to understanding of abstract and complex concepts. Students develop problem-solving and teamwork skills by working in small groups. Students communicate their understanding of mathematics through written responses. Students who need extra support receive additional instruction through our grade level math intervention times. This time allows teachers to focus in on specific skills and content that will support their students to reach grade level proficiency.

Common pre-tests and post-tests are used with each unit. This allows students that show proficiency the opportunity for extension through independent projects such as Envision. Mathematically gifted students are challenged through higher-level thinking and curriculum acceleration. Teachers, resource staff, and parents support ability grouping for all students.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

A. Our school vision is brought to life in music class, and all the specials classes, everyday. Music is part of the culture at Elk Creek Elementary; the whole school gets excited for grade level musicals, the choir sings at school events, and classes love to sing for their teachers or principal as a reward for an exceptionally successful music class. Students acquire basic skills needed to be successful in music for life, whether at a professional or recreational level. Students learn how to sing and match pitch, read music, understand rhythm and keep a steady beat, and most of all, to love music.

Additionally, music is a chance for students to find success outside the core academic realm. With 100% participation in music class, all students are experiencing performing arts through successful grade level musicals/music programs. The students take pride in their weeks of hard work as they perform on stage for their parents and peers. Music class is a continuation of our vision by creating a positive learning community where students learn to explore their voices, instruments, movement, and dance in an environment that is safe and accepting to all. Students constantly sing by themselves in front of their class, starting in the first month of kindergarten. This is used as an assessment of matching pitch as well as a chance for self-reflection and peer feedback.

Through conversations about audience etiquette and respect for others, students readily sing in front of their peers, with nothing but support and encouragement from the rest of the class.

Opportunities for creativity and expression in music class allow children to thrive and shine in ways that are not always seen in a core class. Composing and creating are huge components of music class and get kids thinking at a higher level from kindergarteners making up songs and rhythms to fourth graders composing a written piece for recorder. Our students are held to high standards in music and appreciate when they rise to that exceptional level. Music class is fun because knowing you are creating quality music is rewarding.

To extend learning of music and pushing students to learn singing and performing at a higher level, 3rd and 4th graders are able to participate in a choir after school once a week. This past year, eight of the top music students were offered an audition for three spots in the Colorado All State Elementary Choir in Colorado Springs. Our vision is evident in every area of our school, including music class.

B. Our preschool program serves students ages three to five years old who are identified for early intervention and on an Individualized Education Plan; identified at risk and qualify for the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP); and identified as typical developing.

The core curriculum includes Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies, and The Arts. Teaching Strategies GOLD is used as an assessment tool and is aligned with the state standards and common core. ECE also has the GOLD assessment tool connection with the Kindergarten program which, district wide, began using GOLD at the beginning of the 2013/14 school year.

Literacy is also reinforced through participation with the Raising A Reader (RAR) program. A program that provides weekly book bags that include 4 books in English, Spanish, or Both. Our data has shown over the years that the combined participation in RAR and ECE's preschool program has assisted in giving our student's a 'jump start' on reading. DIBELS-Next data from the Fall 2012 Kindergarten class showed that 86% of the ECE Preschool and RAR participants scored at or above grade level in comparison with non-participants who showed 44% scored at or above grade level.

Overall, the ECE preschool team collaborates with the upper grade levels, K-4th, service providers, and additional school staff. The Early Childhood Specialist for the preschool program also participates on our Solutions Teams to collaborate and work with the school as a whole to incorporate the preschool students into school wide events.

5. Instructional Methods:

Elk Creek's instructional philosophy, with regards to meeting the diverse needs of our students, focuses on using research-based methods across all curricular areas in order to best instruct, remediate, and extend knowledge to ensure optimal learning for all children. Formal and informal data (state, district, and class assessments, pre-assessments, teacher observation, exit slips) is the driving force for determining daily instruction and interventions. Response to Intervention (RtI) is our schoolwide tool to evaluate and monitor students on an individual level academically, behaviorally, and emotionally. As a result, teams collaborate to use data in order to group students accordingly and to develop learning plans and lesson plans to meet their appropriate needs. An example of this includes small group interventions, both within and outside the classroom. Quarterly, we regroup across grade-levels to meet the academic needs in the areas of reading (SFA), writing, and mathematics. These fluid-homogenous groups meet on a daily basis in order to remediate, deepen, or enrich learning.

Within our school, all teachers implement a wide variety of strategies to engage students in the learning within all lessons on a daily basis. Each classroom has access to a presentation system, document camera, laptops, ipads, ipods, and various engaging applications to support learning across all curricular areas. Cooperative learning activities also ensure high levels of achievement and involvement for all students, and are included in lessons throughout the day. In order to meet the needs of our ELL and SPED populations, vocabulary and many concepts are scaffolded through strategies such as gestures, pictures, graphic organizers, realia, and a variety of other techniques. Higher-level questioning and discussions, based on Bloom's Taxonomy, are also implemented throughout the day to ensure advanced levels of learning. Elk Creek teachers are continually striving to meet the unique needs of our students through improved instructional methods and data analysis.

6. Professional Development:

Elk Creek Elementary is a professional learning community (PLC) that operates as part of our district-wide PLC. Our district works hard to be a school district and not a district of schools and to do this we have district wide professional development to instill a common language across the district. With this being said, each school is unique and has it's own needs based on the needs of their students. To ensure that we meet the needs of individual schools, each school sets their own goals in their Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and this drives the school level professional development at Elk Creek.

The district-wide PD that has been provided within the last two years has helped us transition into working with the Colorado Common Core Standards (CCCS) and the curriculum units that our district has adopted. With the work of Lynn Erickson's Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction for the Thinking Classroom, we have worked to build teachers' understanding of working with the new curriculum units and the CCCS. We have also worked this year with building an understanding of how common assessments will be created and implemented district wide to help drive our instruction. To keep up to date with technology, teachers and principals are invited and encourage to take part in our district-wide Digital Educators PD that provides ideas and resources to implement technology into their instruction.

At the building level we set goals as we develop our UIP and these goals drive the need for the school level PD. In the past few years we have focused on our writing instruction and closing the gaps with our English Language Learners (ELL). To build consistency in our writing instruction we have adopted a new resource that has built a common vocabulary in our instruction across the grades. Each teacher attended training to be provided with the PD they needed to successfully implement this new resource into their writing instruction. To address our ELL population, we've had a consultant come in to do walk-throughs to provide feedback to individual teachers and also hold after school PD to address areas of improvement across the grade levels.

Other school level PD includes our grade level PLC time that allows grade level teachers, academic coaches, and our principal to meet weekly to discuss data and create next step goals and assessments. We believe data driven instruction will help us to continue to meet the needs of all students.

7. School Leadership

"All of our kids, are all of our kids," that's a motto we live by here at Elk Creek Elementary. Our leadership team consists of our principal, counselor, academic coaches, and our special education teacher. Each of these five people wears many hats in leading our school and helping to create a collaborative and positive learning culture.

This team, who we call our NET Team (Nurturing and Encouraging Teachers), works together to support all areas within our school. In the area of Response To Intervention (RTI), each NET Team member is the RTI representative for a different grade level. This allows each grade level to be supported by the NET Team. This also allows this team to meet and discuss student needs in our meetings so that we all stay informed of what is happening at each grade level.

We strive to support a building of leaders, as there are many leadership opportunities available to all who work at our school. Each of our Solutions Teams (Family, Community, Attendance, Positive Culture, ELL, and RTI) has a team leader. Each leader is either a member of our NET Team or a teacher who has taken on a leadership role for their Solutions Team. These same leaders, along with the rest of our NET Team, form our School-wide Team. This team meets monthly to share progress on quarterly goals that are set by their teams. Each of these goals is set to support the needs of those kids who we have on our "hotlist." At the end of each quarter, our whole staff attends a meeting to review our quarterly data within each Solutions Team and to hear what the new goal is for each team for the following quarter. We feel the work of these teams has a direct impact on our student achievement and growth of all students and has helped to close the achievement gaps.

As a school of professionals, we hold each other to high standards of professional practice. All members assume team and individual leadership responsibilities. An example of this comes from our grade level Professional Learning Community teams. Each team meets weekly, supported by our coaches and principal, to discuss student work samples, instructional practices and share resources to meet the needs of all students. Our leadership team trusts classroom teachers to always do what is best for students and provide support when it is needed.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Publisher: McGraw Hill Education

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	88	82	82	81	66
% Advanced	67	40	37	52	30
Number of students tested	49	55	51	54	61
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	4	0	0	0	1
% of students tested with alternative assessment	8	0	0	0	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	86	75	72	64	35
% Advanced	64	29	8	32	6
Number of students tested	22	28	25	22	17
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	40	30	0	60
% Advanced	50	20	20	0	40
Number of students tested	2	5	5	0	5
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	56	67	60	36
% Advanced	45	6	0	30	0
Number of students tested	11	16	12	20	14
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	88	64	76	60	32
% Advanced	53	14	5	30	0
Number of students tested	17	22	21	20	19
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or					

Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	90	93	87	94	80
% Advanced	77	60	60	65	41
Number of students tested	31	30	30	34	41
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

All Students Tested/Grade: 4

Publisher: McGraw Hill Education

Test: TCAP

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	85	93	74	78	53
% Advanced	33	48	30	33	16
Number of students tested	48	41	54	51	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	1	0	0	1	1
% of students tested with alternative assessment	2	0	0	2	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	95	56	71	38
% Advanced	32	26	22	18	0
Number of students tested	22	19	27	17	24
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	50	80	50	57	67
% Advanced	25	20	0	29	0
Number of students tested	4	5	2	7	3
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	78	57	44	15
% Advanced	9	33	13	11	0
Number of students tested	11	9	23	9	13
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	82	56	38	37
% Advanced	7	24	16	15	0
Number of students tested	14	17	25	13	19
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	83	100	93	92	66
% Advanced	43	64	44	38	28
Number of students tested	30	25	27	37	29
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 3
Publisher: McGraw Hill Education

Test: TCAP
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	92	89	87	76	76
% Advanced	8	7	13	6	6
Number of students tested	49	55	52	50	62
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	4	0	0	0	1
% of students tested with alternative assessment	8	0	0	0	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	86	89	76	60	53
% Advanced	10	11	4	0	0
Number of students tested	21	28	25	21	17
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	40	40	0	60
% Advanced	0	20	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	5	5	0	5
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	82	75	67	56	43
% Advanced	9	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	11	16	12	18	14
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	88	82	81	56	42
% Advanced	12	0	10	0	0
Number of students tested	17	22	21	18	19
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	94	93	90	88	90
% Advanced	6	13	16	9	10
Number of students tested	31	30	21	32	42
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 4
Publisher: McGraw Hill Education

Test: TCAP
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	81	81	65	69	55
% Advanced	2	12	4	2	6
Number of students tested	48	41	54	51	49
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	1	0	0	1	1
% of students tested with alternative assessment	2	0	0	2	2
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	73	74	52	53	33
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	22	19	27	17	24
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	50	20	0	29	33
% Advanced	0	20	0	0	0
Number of students tested	4	5	2	7	3
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	45	56	57	22	15
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	11	9	23	9	13
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	50	71	56	31	26
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	14	17	25	13	19
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					

Number of students tested					
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	93	88	74	84	76
% Advanced	3	20	7	3	10
Number of students tested	30	25	27	37	29
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: